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ABSTRACT

The author pays tribute to Mordecai Gorelik, a noted critic and scholar of the theatre, by reflecting on the man's critical and dramatic writing. Turning first to his critical writing, the author makes special mention of Gorelik's essays in newspapers and notable journals, his book and production reviews, his articles on theatre appearing in both the "Encyclopedia Britannica" and the "Encyclopedia Americana," his contributions to other books, and his classic 1940 work, "New Theaters for Old," which synthesized a century of modern drama and theatre. In his mention of Gorelik's dramatic writing, the author reflects on the following works: "Herr Biedermann and the Firebugs," "The Annotated Hamlet," "The Big Day," "Paul Thompson Forever," "Rainbow Terrace," "Andrus, or the Vision," "United We Stand," and "Yes and No." (HOD)

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MORDECAI GORELIK: A SCHOLAR AND WRITER WHO ADDRESSES HUMANITY

It is foolhardy at best to attempt to discuss a man the stamp of Mordecai Gorelik as critic, scholar and dramatic writer within the brief time allotted me and think to do him justice. I am not so naive. Yet having accepted the assignment, I will like Sisyphus forge ahead on an impossible task.

Let me begin with some personal impressions. It has been my priviledge to have known Max Gorelik for ten years as a colleague in the Theater Department at my university where he gave me, my fellow staff members and the students an experience seldom relaxing but never dull, an experience constantly stimulating that pushed one up to the mark and that furnished by dint of the man and his mind and his art an enriching influence on us all. My impressions are of a man cantankerous yet kindly, opinionated yet open-minded, who is a tough-minded, highly gifted artist and intellectual, firm in his vision of the truth and in what he wants to say and do in his art and his criticism. He is a man who argues with crystal clarity in thought and expression and always from a depth of experience. He is opinionated, and one may not always agree with his opinion, but should one attempt to challenge it he had better marshall well his arguments. That is not to say that Max Gorelik is inflexible or unseeking of the reactions of others to his work. He simply expects reactions to be supported by reasons, by rational thought, for without the latter, he justly contents, reactions are of small practical use to him. Having offered him evaluations of many of his plays, I know whereof I speak. Let me also say he is a most perceptive and constructive critic of the creative work of others. His

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mind is like the sun at high noon, burning down overhead, illuminating all corners, and admitting no shadows. And we certainly find this mind at work in his critical writings.

To my mind Max Gorelik as critic and scholar and artist has successfully assumed the challenge implicit in the words of the Russian composer Moussourgsky: "Art is not an end in itself, but a means of addressing humanity." For more than sixty years of a still active career his writing has "addressed humanity."

Turning first to his critical writing, we find it covers a long waterfront. There are essays in newspapers and in notable journals like Theatre Arts, Theatre Annual, Players Magazine, New Theatre, (Tulane) Drama Review, (Educational) Theatre Journal, and Australia's Masque, to mention a few. There are book and production reviews, articles on theatre in both the Encyclopaedia Britannica and Encylopedia Americana, contributions to books like his superb article on the scene designer in Gassner's Producing the Play,[1] and the now classic New Theatres for Old written in 1940, which synthesized a century of modern drama and theatre and solidified a belief progressively developed through his writings that the theatre exists to enlighten as well as to entertain audiences.[2]

Salient influences in Gorelik's life generated a wide scope of research interests. His immigrant youth in the backyards of Brooklyn gave him an affinity for the working class (further strengthened by the Great Depression) and for European culture ultimately leading to research on European theatre production and design with a focus on the German and Soviet Theatre. Travel abroad, supported by Foundation grants, allowed him to view his subject first hand. His work with Group Theatre, the Workers Theatres movement of the 30's,

Robert Edmond Jones and latter's advocacy of the New Stagecraft movement contributed topics for a number of articles. Gorelik worked for and visited abroad with Bertolt Brecht (well before the latter was discovered by Eric Bentley) and became so impressed with the Epic Theatre of Brecht and Piscator that he seldom abandoned it as a subject for study. World War II and its aftermath of Cold War made firmer his views on the theatre's social purpose as he later recorded his observations about the American theatre - he lamented its tendency toward psychological introspection and its avoidance of social issues.[3] Also springing from the influences and experience of his life and career, other topics in his research spectrum encompassed his stage and film designs, the aims and methods of a course called "The Scenic Imagination", Australian Theatre, the "Irrational Theatre" of Absurdism and the participatory theatre of the 1960's.

By the 1930's Gorelik began to publish articles--a habit he happily sustained over five decades to the present--reflecting his developing ideas about the nature of theatre and the art of scenic design. Here was a practicing professional designer who not only could be articulate in print about his own work but also about the entire scope of theatre. Early articles about scene design expressed beliefs that the setting should serve the actor ("I Design for the Group Theatre"[4]), go beyond mere illusion and pretty pictures to employ "immediate ritual" and a "cubism of experience" ("The Conquest of Stage Space"[5]), and be less important than the playwright ("Some Observations on the New Stagecraft"[6]). Gorelik's dissatisfaction with a middle class theatre not responsive to social needs and his belief that the theatre belonged to the people surfaced in essays on the Workers Theatre Movement of the 30's ("Theatre is a Weapon"[7]). Contact with Bertold Brecht and Epic Theatre concretized for

Gorelik qualities that he sought in theatre: "moral sensitivity", "scientific accuracy" and "stirring imagination."[8] With Brecht he shared a conviction that the theatre should deal with contemporary problems and the plight of the common man and the poor. He found Brecht's demand for the employment of the scientific method a means for the revelation of the truth. Consequently he championed and clarified the cause of Epic Theatre in such articles, written before and after World War II, as "Brecht: I am the Einstein of the New Stage Form,"[9] "An Epic Theatre Catecism",[10] "Epic Scene Design"[11], and numerous others.

Twice awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship in the thirties, Gorelik was helped to complete a study of the Theatre which resulted in his masterpiece and now acclaimed international classic New Theatres for Old in 1940. Orson Wells noted in a review that Gorelik's perspectives are "sharp but true; his findings are alive with enthusiasm and always opinionated enough to be valid."[12] Walter Pritchard Eaton commented: "...once you get your definitions settled with him, his book becomes a stimulating and provocative one, and...leaves you with the uncomfortable feeling that the designers are more imaginative and intelligent artists just now than the playwrights. Every dramatist should be made to read this book."[13] And Barnard Hewitt, observed the work to be "in many ways the best book on the theatre that has appeared in 20 years."[14]

In New Theatres for Old its author sees theatre as an instrument for the better understanding of life, not as mere entertainment or as an outlet for pent-up emotion. "Theatre", states Gorelik, "is entering a long struggle to maintan its integrity and freedom of thought, to hold on to its sacred duty of clarifying life."[15] Examining the theatre of the past and present on the premise that the purpose of theatre is to "influence life by theatrical means", Gorelik concludes that the theatre is script, that most theatre in this century has failed to realize its social responsibility to illuminate the life of its

audience, and that the future theatre will abandon the peep-box illusionism for presentational staging (called "conventional staging" by Gorelik) which introduces the stage as a platform for action and the performance as a ceremony in which actors and audience take part.[16] He suggests the theatre of the future combine Epic Theatre's scientific accuracy and methods and the Symbolist's imagination (that is, a merging of art and science, imagination and fact) to best realize its capacity for the revelation of life. In terms of production styles, much of this prediction has occurred in the theatre; content has not yet been so widely effected.

A masterpiece of scholarship, the book is a veritable encylopedia of information and provocative thought.

Gorelik's published work in the 50's, 60's, and 70's went beyond a steady focus on Epic Theatre and world theatre to center largely on three other areas. First, the aims and methods of his course called "The Scenic Imagination" are outlined in several articles. In "The Scenic Imagination: Still Evolving," he discussed the importance of metaphor--a core concept of the course demanding the design student not only to analyze a play as thoroughly as a director but also precisely to describe its meaning in terms of an image. Additionally, he listed as criteria that the metaphor chosen be:

> Implicit in the documentation of the setting (geographically and historically
> Vivid in its evocative power
> Adequate for the calibre of the play
> Dynamic in its ability to change and develop
> Useful to the actor.[17]

Also he admitted no longer accepting from students such obvious images as a prison, a cage, or a cave for dramatic settings, or a merry-go-round for comic settings. Eventually, "The Scenic Imagination" was prepared as a manuscript for

a book. Publishers offered it did a disservice to scholarship by not bringing it to print.

Secondly, the limitations of the American theatre and such forms as Absurdisim became objects of concern in other articles. In an 1969 essay entitled "Root-Freeze of American Drama," Gorelik complained that dramatic writing of the past two decades" has twisted and squirmed to avoid controversy," and rebuked our drama for its narrow focus on domestic disharmony, sexual neuroses, and narcissistic psychological introspection as the chief sources of conflict.[18] He did credit dramas like Jack Gelber's The Cuban Thing, Joseph Hellers' We Bombed in New Haven, Howard Sackler's The Great White Hope, George Sklar's And People All Around (as well as the German Brecht's Mother Courage) for dealing with "human beings caught in the great contradictions of our times."[19] Absurdism, another Gorelik target, was taken to task for its discounting of rational thought and its delight in obscuratism. In "The Theatre of Sad Amusement", he wrote: "Absurdist plays contain no living characters of recognizable dilemma. They do not clarify life, but instead offer senseless speeches and cryptic frustrations."[20]

Doubtless to the delight of its theatre page readers, the New York Times printed an energetic debate on the subject waged by Max Gorelik against champions of absurdism.[21] A statement of Gorelik apparently summing up his persistent concern about the American theatre, and one still holding urgent currency in the 1980's, is found in "Legacy of New Deal Drama,":

> If the theatre's history of more than two thousand years means anything, vital drama has always been dedicated to the defense of human values. It still has the obligation to clarify life for its audiences in terms of dynamic action--even more so in an era of confusion, sloganeering, and possible atomic disintegration. The national crisis of the 30's gave its dramatists an urgent sense of their responsibility and of the need for independent thought to go with it.

> But they were supported morally by a nation that had taken a constructive political course. The drama of commitment, and the general insurgency that gave it strength, were finally erased by the reform legislation of the New Deal, by the long period of prosperity following the Second World War, and the advent of the irrational-minded New Left in the theatre. It will be interesting to see if the American dramatic experience of the 30's has left a viable tradition behind it.[22]

That Mordecai Gorelik stands in the top echelon of critics and scholars of the theatre will not be contested. Let us now pass on to another phase of his career, namely his dramatic writing.

Not content to be just a scene designer as well as a critic, historian, director, and teacher, Max Gorelik also writes plays. As early as 1926 he advised the ambitious scene designer that he must always be the "slave of the playwright" and that if he found that realization demeaning then would have "no alternative but to write his own scripts--not mediocre ones either, but good ones."[23] Taking his own advice, Gorelik pursued playwriting with a passion. In 1983 he plans to publish a collection of his plays encompassing five full-length works and three of his seven or more short plays. In addition to these dramas are two other works, a translation/adaptation of Max Frisch's Herr Biedermann and the Firebugs and an adaptation of Hamlet, which we will look at first.

Thanks to Gorelik, the Swiss dramatist Max Frisch became known to American audiences and readers when his Herr Biedermann and the Firebugs, translated and adapted by Mordecai Gorelik, was published in Block and Shedd's widely-used anthology Masters of Modern Drama.[24] The play has enjoyed about two hundred American productions in community and university theatres, including a short-run off-Broadway premiere in 1963, which Gorelik designed and shared directing credits with Gene Frankel. Two years later it was produced with great success at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. The play, you will remember,

presents a middle-class businessman (Biedermann) who naively allows two arsonsists, obvious in their incendiary aims, to be guests in his house. Despite Biedermann's courteous hospitality, they burn the house down. The translator chose to see the play as a parable of "middle-class behavior in countries which threaten each other with nuclear incineration," and continued to remark in a program note for the 1965 university production, that "faced with the terror, the bourgeois citizen resolutely shuts his eyes in the hope that it will go away."[25] The idiomatic translation, subtitled "A learning play without a lesson," evinces the sure-handed skill of Gorelik as a translator.

In 1961 came The Annotated Hamlet, an experiment in Epic style that combined dramatic production with the quality of a lecture demonstration.[26] With the aim of clarifying Hamlet for present-day audiences--in particular those spectators not familiar with the play, he adapted the Shakespeare drama using Epic Theatre devices such as projected slides and a commentator to juxtapose scholarly comment and historical exposition with key scenes from the drama. A 1961 production designed and directed by Gorelik at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale proved both exciting and controversial.[27] While a portion of theatregoers initiated into Shakespeare felt Hamlet needed no such clarification and rearrangement, few failed to be stimulated and (one dares to say) enlightened by the experimental produciton. The scholarship that the adaptor brought to the play was immense. The experiment, to my mind, was both lively and rewarding, and particularly effective in clarifying Hamlet for those with little prior knowledge of the play.

For purposes chiefly of familiarization, let us direct our attention to the original plays, outlining first two of his short plays.[28] Although Max Gorelik wryly calls himself a budding dramatist at eighty-three, he began writing short

plays early in his career.

One of the later short plays is The Big Day, published in the 1977 edition of The Best Short Play Series.[29] The action occurs in the present in an inderendent machine shop. A merger has taken place with a large conglomerate which dispatches its own hirelings to spy out any resistence to the authority of the new front office. A chief target is a veteran shop superintendent who momentarily defies his new bosses by refusing to fire a capable Union machinest branded as a troublemaker by the management. When the supervisor realizes that his own position will be seriously threatened, he reluctantly compromises and discharges the machinest who has never been afraid to risk his security for his convictions. Despite an ambitious number of characters and issues to be developed in a short play, the drama holds our attention through its richly detailed environment and its interesting central character.

An earlier short play is Paul Thompson Forever, published in 1950.[30] In this fantasy, a hard-boiled foreman (the title character) returns abruptly after death to an astounded wife and daughter, accompanied by an Interrogator from the Beyond charged with investigating the foreman's soul to determine his position in the Afterlife. The decision based on whether the man has been beneficient to family and mankind or selfish is resolved affirmatively with the aid of the wife's protective evasions and lies. The play is significant because it foreshadows the author's full-length play RAINBOW TERRACE and thus provides us with a transition point to move to the latter play and other long plays.

RAINBOW TERRACE is the name of a limbo-like suburb of the Afterlife whose inhabitants are not permitted money, alcohol or disobedience to the rules at risk of being literally disintegrated in the public square.[31] Citizens are urged to contemplate their past lives in a school called the Process. Rankled

by the proscriptive regulations and the blandness of this Afterlife society is an aggressive and self-made businessman named Falkimer (like Paul Thompson an entity unto himself) who lives with his wife and son and visits his girlfriend on the side. The restlessly energetic Falkimer flaunts the rules by making and marketing to his neighbors an alcoholic tonic, using paper I.O.U.'s as currency. This illegal activity frightens his family, angers the authorities and causes dissension among his neighbors, particularly when he demands a transfer to heaven not believing that a God who let him succeed in business (by selling a bogus tonic to the unsuspecting) would not have intended him for Afterlife's highest realm. His activity is halted, however. Falkimer is then tried and convicted by a tribunal of angels, and sentenced to public disintegration just as a anti-establishment conspiracy by rebellious angels is squelched. Falkimer is not an admirable hero but his energy and the question he poses is compelling. The author's theme posits a reaction to the biblical quotation appearing on the frontpiece of the playscript: "Woe unto him who strives with his Maker, an earthen vessel with the potter! Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, what makest thou?" (Isiah, 45:9) "The vessel," remarked actor Morris Carnovsky in a letter to Max after reading the play and commending it for stimulating his thinking, "will demand of its maker the reason for its being."[32] The drama is a modern morality play with a question in place of a moral. Its concept and theme are intriguing and it raises important questions. The author has noted that the germinal idea for the play came from a conversation he had when a boy with his father about the Hereafter.[33]

RAINBOW TERRACE was well received and proved playable when premiered in 1966 at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale in a production designed and directed by the author.[34] It stirred controversy as Max Gorelik's work usually

does.

Not set in the Hereafter but in a Northern Irish town in 1971 is a second long play: THE FEAST OF UNREASON.[35] An unwedded woman in her thirties is assigned a new municipal cottage because her father is a Protestant councilman and policeman. A moderate Catholic seminarian housing officer peacefully protests the assignment while unknown to him his assistant, a girl recruited by the IRA, initiates militant action by moving a coarse but needy Catholic slum family into the same cottage. Although the Councilman's daughter is much put upon by the family of intruders who refuse to leave, she begins to have some compassion for their plight. When a Protestant mob attacks the Catholics in her housing development, a bloody melee ensues and innocent people are killed. The Protestant woman loses her father and her complacency and becomes socially aware of the problems of her place and time. The author does not take sides; his point and the play's action are resemblant of those of O'Casey in The Plough and the Stars: violence and the inability to consider rational compromise lead to self-destruction. Loosely based on an actual incident in 1968, the script demonstrates well-detailed research, its author's good ear for Irish idiom and a good hand at drawing some lively characters.

Moving from the economic-religious war in Northern Ireland, Gorelik mirrors the opposition of scientific and religious faith in ANDRUS, OR THE VISION.[36] Premiered in 1977 at Kansas State University and later produced at East Central University in Oklahoma, the drama, set in thirteenth-century Europe, introduces a demon of secular knowledge and unbelief named Belial who has inherited Andrus, the son of a alchemist, for a promise to keep him from being "entrapped by the faith in God." When grown however, Andrus becomes a coal-miner who is devoutly Christian. To wrest Andrus out of his religious belief, Belial sends him

visions of a future man-created paradise--air travel is one such vision--which Andrus' fellow miners hail as a sign of Jesus' second coming to free Christianity from a Roman pope. The Inquisition becomes alarmed and orders Andrus to renounce his visions or be burned at the stake. Andrus remains unrepentent until a final vision, predicting the atomic age and the destruction made possible by modern warfare and developed scientific thought, horrifies Andrus and he recants. Sentenced to life imprisonment, he is freed when the miners, armed by Belial, revolt. Yet the demon finds Andrus hopelessly stuck in his faith so he removes the miner's gift of vision and leaves him to the comfort of "orthodox supersitions."

Thematically the drama proclaims for science and for man's freedom to think against the strictures of religious conformatism and dogma. From a questioning of the religious establishment "truisms" and proscriptions in RAINBOW TERRACE, we come to a central character taking an opposing stand who finds it more comfortable to accept orthodox beliefs. A staged reading of the play (in an abridged version) for a Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship provoked lively discussion and persuaded me of the drama's particular appeal for liberal religious groups.[37]

Of another stamp and somewhat reminiscent of the didactic drama of the thirties is a fourth long play, UNITED WE STAND.[38] The author takes us to a Bricklayers Local during the Joseph McCarthy era. In the midst of a mismanaged wildcat strike, the AFL Union local is torn by internal dissension, fueled by a Red witch-hunt surreptiously manipulated by the Local's veteran secretary, a strong-willed woman. Good men and a vigorous young leader are maligned and expelled; and stoodges assume their places, stifling constructive action. When the International Brotherhood of A.F.L. demands that good leadership be restored

and that the abortive strike be settled, the Union rank and file restore their former young leader and, with that act, begin to win back the earlier unity they enjoyed. The scheming machinations of the power-hungry secretary are brought to light and she is expelled.

Containing a rich amount of detail about Union activities, the drama's action, while rendered somewhat diffuse by the welter of characters and complications, trenchantly demonstrates the destructive effect of the Red-baiting atmosphere of the McCarthy period and a manipulative opportunist on a local union of workers. With THE BIG DAY, UNITED WE STAND richly details the environment of the blue collar worker's world, a world the author apparently knows well.

YES AND NO (originally entitled MEEGAN'S SON) is the final full-length play to be mentioned here and will be descibed only briefly.[39] Set in a seaside community of 1971 during the Vietnam War, the drama introduces a small-time lawyer and his wife, both former radicals, who are upset when their eighteen-year old son Larry joins a local commune in producing a "peace ballet." The aging liberal, a pole apart from the fervor of his son's generation and concerned with holding on to a conservative client not sympathetic to antiwar protests, has become estranged from his son. When the latter and his pacifist friends are threatened by "patriotic" community forces of the right including several establishment hooligans imbued with the My Lai mentality, a physical clash occurs which brings father and son closer together. "The play's theme," noted the author in letter, "is that My Lai exposed a national moral decay."[40] The drama perceptively portrays the conflict between the generations and that between dove and hawk, obliquely reflecting in the latter the mentality of the Lt. Calley incident in Vietnam.

In conclusion it can be observed that the plays of Max Gorelik represents a vitally energetic aspect of his creative career as writer and artist, and also bear out a lifelong dedication to a drama of social commitment. He has been, and continues to be, a writer and artist of commitment who indeed "addresses humanity."

The closing words of New Theatres for Old have not lost their strength today nor has their speaker.

> The storm is now upon us. The atmosphere of thought grows constricted; people throw away their minds and begin to shout the slogans of the market place. And what will happen to our theatre? Part of it, no doubt, will join the hue and cry, and cry louder than any. Another part will turn completely escapist. But the rest will go courageously though all that lies ahead. It will build the foundations of a future theatre worthy of a democratic American people.[41]

Max Gorelik is the tireless champion of that theatre and that dream. Max Gorelik, gifted artist and eloquent gadfly, distinguished critic and dedicated citizen of the world, we salute you.

REFERENCES

*The article was presented as a paper for a session entitled "A Tribute to Mordecai Gorelik" at the American Theatre Association Convention, 1982, Sheraton Centre, New York City, August 18. Other speakers were Marilyn Hyland, University of Baltimore; Marie Kilker, Southern Illinos University-Carbondale; and playwright Barrie Stavis, NYC. The session was chaired by Norman J. Fedder, Kansas State University.

[1]Mordecai Gorelik, "Designing the Play", Producing the Play, ed. John Gassner, with Philip Barber, New Scene Technicians Handbook (Rev. ed.; New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1953), pp. 301-54.

[2]Mordecai Gorelik, New Theatres for Old (New York: Samuel French, 1940).

[3]These views of Gorelik on the American theatre also are reflected in the following articles; all authored by Gorelik: "Towards a Larger Theatre," Contact, 1, no. 2 (1959), 47-56; "The Theatre of Sad Amusement; A Rejoinder," Drama Survey, 2, No. 2 (Fall, 1962), 175-77; "Legacy of the New Deal Drama," Drama Survey, 4, No. 1 (Spring, 1965), 38-43; "American Drama at Dead End," Contact, 4, No. 3 (1964), 62-64; "Root-Freeze of American Drama," Meanjean Quarterly (Melbourne, Australia) (Autumn, 1969), 90-95.

[4]Mordecai Gorelik, "I Design for the Group Theatre," Theatre Arts, 23, No. 3 (March, 1939), 180-86.

[5]"If it now becomes clear that the art of stage setting, enriched by its experience with the reminiscent intropective form, is turning from the technique of illusion and of static mood, toward the technique of an immediate ritual in the theatre. It seeks to create a current, not a remembered, emotion in the spectator, making him react objectively to the play of action, color and light which is taking place before his eyes. It is proper to say that the new settings seek a cubism of experience, transla-

> ting into stage terms the phenomena of the outer-world, just as the cubist and post-cubist painter translates the world into a pattern of paint on canvas. This throws some light on what may be described as the slogan of Gordon Craig: "Towards a theatrical theatre!" To be sure, Craig advanced this slogan on a purely aesthetic basis which did not explain itself and which sometimes led to absurd conclusions. But his intuition was correct: the modern theatre as it passes out of its introverted "atmospheric" period, moves toward the basic stage form of theatrical ceremony."

. . . Mordecai Gorelik, "The Conquest of Stage Space," Theatre Arts, 18, No. 3 (March, 1934), 215-17.

[6]Mordecai Gorelik, "Some Observations on the New Stagecraft," The Arts, 9 (April, 1926), 193-97.

[7]Mordecai Gorelik, "Theatre is a Weapon," Theatre Arts, 18, No. 4 (June, 1934), 420-33.

[8]"Theatre is entering on a long struggle to maintain its integrity and freedom of thought to hold on to its sacred duty of clarifying life. In the effort to remain clear in judgement, it will reach its greatest moral sensitivity, it most scientific accuracy, its most stirring imagination. It will rally around its most devoted audiences who will share with it the most sublime of all experiences--that of learning truly from life."

. . . Gorelik, New Theatres for Old, p. 471.

[9]Mordecai Gorelik, "Brecht: 'I am the Einstein of the New Stage Form'," Theatre Arts, 41, No. 3 (March, 1957), 72-73, 86-87.

[10]Mordecai Gorelik, "An Epic Theatre Catechism," Tulane Drama Review, 4 (Autumn, 1959), 90-95.

[11]Mordecai Gorelik, "Epic Scene Design," Theatre Arts, 43, No. 10 (October, 1959), 75-80.

[12]Orson Wells, Review of New Theatres for Old, Saturday Review of Literature, 23 (February 8, 1941), 12.

[13]Walter Pritchard Eaton, Review of New Theatres for Old, Books (February 9, 1941), 12.

[14]Barnard Hewitt, "Mordecai Gorelik," The High School Thespian, 13, November, 1941), 6.

[15]See Footnote 8 above.

[16]"Conventional staging accepts as basic the idea that a performance is a ceremony in which actors and audience take part. The stage is a platform, the settings are scenic structure, and the actions, wearing stage costumes, are obviously representing personages other than themselves.

> Illusory staging, on the contrary, seeks to wipe out of the mind of the spectator the consciousness that he is sitting in a theatre. Instead of a platform, the stage seems to be a peep-box framed by a proscenium. . . . Scenically, the avowed idea of this type of staging is a trompe l'oeil, a simulation of real places and a lifelike imitation of the arts of nature."

. . . Mordecai Gorelik, "Theatre," Encyclopedia Americana (1962), 26, 492.

[17]Mordecai Gorelik, "The Scenic Imagination: Still Evolving," Players Magazine, 43, No. 1 (October/November, 1967), 24.

[18]Gorelik, "Root-Freeze of American Drama," 91.

[19]Gorelik, "Root-Freeze of American Drama," 95.

[20]Gorelik, "The Theatre of Sad Amusement," 175.

[21]"Theater is a special, remarkable form of social communication, one that, when it is healthy, celebrates the highest aspiration and deepest widsom of its communicants. Therefore the apologists of absurdism are correct when they say that the absurdist dramas (or non-dramas) describe non-communication. Not only do these plays describe it, but they also form part of it themeselves."

. . . Mordecai Gorelik, "The Absurd Absurdists," New York Times, August 8, 1965, Sec. II, p. 1.

One defender of absurdism taking exception to Gorelik's views was Martin Esslin. See Martin Esslin, "The Theatre of the Absurd Isn't Absurd at All," New York Times, August 29, 1965, Sec. II, p. 1,3.

[22]Gorelik, "Legacy of the New Deal Drama," 38.

[23]"A scenic artist with a real sense of drama will always be a slave of the playwright. If that realization galls the ambitious designer and he still wants a high place in the theatre he appears to have no alternative but to write his own scripts--not mediocre ones either but good ones. The dramatist's insight into problems of situation and character and the actor's assumption of the dramatic story are the things the theatre lives by; beside these things the turmoil over lights and paints, color schemes, revolving stages, circus auditoriums and constructivist scaffolding, is of no consequence."

. . . Program, Nirvana, Greenwich Village Theatre, March 3, 1926. Quoted in James C. Palmer, Jr., "Mordecai Gorelik's Theory of the Theatre," (Ph.D. dissertation, Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, 1967), p. 69.

[24]Max Frisch, Herr Biedermann and the Firebugs, trans. Mordecai Gorelik, in Masters of the Drama, eds. Haskell M. Block and Robert G. Shedd (New York: Random House, 1969), pp. 1162-84.

[25]Program, Herr Biedermann and the Firebugs, Southern Illinos University-Carbondale, 1965.

[26]Mordecai Gorelik, "The Annotated Hamlet," (MS in Special Collections, Southern Illinois University-Carbondale Library, Carbondale).

[27]Robert Hethmon, "The Annotated Hamlet," Drama Survey, 2, No. 1, (Spring, 1962), 80-93.

[28]The following short plays are not treated in his paper. For their descriptions, originally composed by the playwright to my knowledge, I am indebted to an informational brochure entitled "Mordecai Gorelik" prepared for the 1982 convention of the American Theatre Association by Professor Marilyn

Hyland of the University of Baltimore. (MS in Special Collections, Southern Illinois University - Carbondale Library, Carbondale).

OFF DUTY (Cast: 2 men, 2 women. Setting: a commonplace sitting room) A young reporter who understands political crises and natural disasters better than he understands women, is fascinated by a romantic young lady who is mortally insulted when he expects her to lie down. The young lady's fiance gives him a black eye and bloody nose, and a woman reporter adds some crisp advice. Undaunted, the reporter is about to make another date when a phone call orders him back on duty at once to cover a major news break. The gal reporter is assigned to go with him.

SATURDAY (Cast: 2 men, 3 women. Setting: an office) A young businessman, about to be married the next day to a sweet and sensible girl, is waylaid by two other types of females before he gets back to normal.

SONG OF THE WHIPPOORWILL (Cast: 3 men, 2 women. Setting: a kitchen in an old farm house.) A young actress is spending the summer interlude as a maid-of-a-work on a farm occupied by a commercial artist and his teenage nephew. All three have no work and no prospects. Weekend visitors, a man and wife, arrive in their car and are conned into buying a month's groceries. The wife wants to hear the song of the whippoorwill while the husband tries to proposition the actress. 'As evening draws nigh,' all go back to the city and the farm is left to the hooting of the whippoorwill.

ABOUT A CAT (Cast: 2 men, 2 women. Setting: a Greenwich Village living room.) The languorous wife of a popular novelist goes to a bohemian party, where she allures a brash neighborhood youth. Next morning, when the youth comes to claim her, he is given a brush-off. After he leaves, however, the wife changes her mind about him--only to find he has been appropriated by her maid.

MRS. DISASTER (Cast: 2 men, 1 woman, a boy, 10, a girl, 8. Setting: a living room.) The owner of a struggling new ad agency, returning from an unsuccessful business trip, takes out his bad temper on his family.

[29]Mordecai Gorelik, "The Big Day," in Best Short Plays 1977, ed. Stanley Richards (Radnor, PA: Chilton, 1977), pp. 304-33.

[30]Mordecai Gorelik, Paul Thompson Forever (Boston: Walter H. Baker, 1950).

[31]Mordecai Gorelik, "Rainbow Terrace," (MS in Special Collections, Southern Illinois University-Carbondale Library, Carbondale).

[32]Excerpt from a letter from Morris Carnovsky, Preface to "Rainbow Terrace."

[33]Mordecai Gorelik, Introduction to "Toward a Larger Theatre," (MS in

possession of author). In this introduction to his collection of plays planned for publication, Gorelik cites a conversation held when a boy with his father. Prior to publication of "Toward a Larger Theatre," he reserves this story for his own use.

[34]In a staged reading of the play held at Southern Illinos University well in advance of its actual production, the role of the central character Falkimer was ably interpreted by the late Harry T. Moore, noted D.H. Lawrence scholar and then Research Professor in the Department of English at the University. On stage the role was lustily portrayed by professional actor Paul Mann.

[35]Mordecai Gorelik, "Feast of Unreason," (MS in possession of author).

[36]Mordecai Gorelik, "Andrus, or the Vision," (MS in Special Collections, Southern Illinos University-Carbondale Library, Carbondale).

[37]Refers to a staged reading, directed by Christian H. Moe, of ANDRUS for a Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship in Carbondale, Illinois on April 30, 1978.

[38]Mordecai Gorelik, "United We Stand," (MS in possession of author).

[39]Mordecai Gorelik, "Yes and No," (MS in possession of author). An earlier version of the play entitled "Meegan's Son" is in Special Collections, Southern Illinois University-Carbondale-Library, Carbondale.

[40]Letter to writer from Mordecai Gorelik, February 10, 1976.

[41]Gorelik, New Theatres for Old, p. 472.